

## Nevada County Transportation Commission

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County. NCTC coordinates state and federal transportation programs for Nevada County, the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee.

### 2005 NCTC Commissioners

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Nevada County District I Supervisor

#### Tim Brady

Member-at-Large

#### Patti Ingram, Chairman

Grass Valley City Council

#### Russ Steele

Member-at-Large

#### Josh Susman

Truckee Town Council

#### Robin Sutherland

Nevada County District IV Supervisor

#### Conley Weaver, Vice-Chairman

Mayor, City of Nevada City

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The Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter is published quarterly. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please write or call the Nevada County Transportation Commission office.

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### Upcoming NCTC Meeting

The next meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission is scheduled on:

**Wednesday, January 18, 2006 at 8:30 a.m., Nevada County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 950 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City, CA.**

# NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

Issue 26

"Creating a better future by building upon successes of the past"

December 2005




## What Is Going Around and Around in Truckee?

*The first dual roundabouts in Northern California*, located in the Town of Truckee, are a great solution for the issue of traffic congestion at the Interstate-80/State Route 89 Interchange. Caltrans initial plan was to install traffic signals at the I-80 on and off ramps, but the Town requested this innovative concept already proven successful in several cities in Colorado. Thus far, local traffic has adjusted nicely to the new maneuvers. The next test is coming soon when snow falls and the tourists try their hand at driving dual roundabouts.



*The newly constructed dual roundabouts in the Town of Truckee at the I-80/SR 89 Interchange*

The Town of Truckee received approval in January 2003 from Caltrans to proceed with the roundabout option. They contracted with Bickett Engineering, Inc. (BEI) of Grass Valley to design the roundabouts, and BEI worked closely with Caltrans and the Town to plan and construct the roundabouts in record time.

The State contributed \$750,000 from the SHOPP Safety Improvement Program and the Town provided additional funding. When the lowest bid was higher than funds available, NCTC provided \$350,000 in RSTP (Regional Surface Transportation Program) funds. The project cost \$3.5 million to construct. 

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### What Will Future Transportation Look Like?

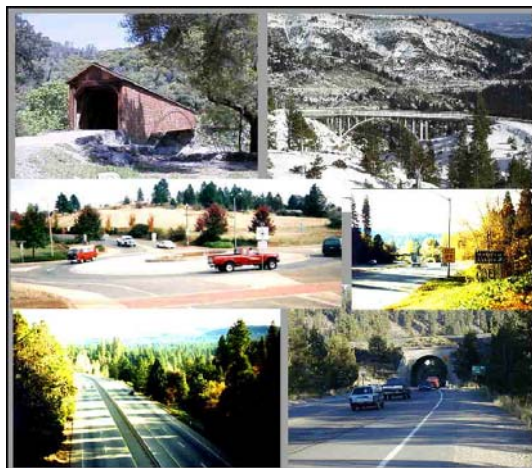
**Government leaders spoke out** about what they saw at the 12<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems held in San Francisco the week of November 6<sup>th</sup>. These "smart-car" technologies claim to reduce traffic deaths and congestion, warn drivers of potholes, advise cars of available parking spaces, provide up-to-the minute weather and traffic conditions, and warn of possible collisions. A wireless communication network, traffic databases, and navigation tools would need to be in place and a mass of vehicles equipped with the technology to make all of this work, needs to be in place. An estimated \$7 billion worth of hardware would need to be installed along the U.S. roadways too.

California officials say that new technology should be a top priority for all new and improved highways throughout the State. With California continuing to grow but transportation funding dwindling, State leaders are looking to new technologies to address traffic congestion without putting money towards new highways or widening projects. The Schwarzenegger administration has set technology as a cornerstone to improve California's future.

The chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, Senator Tom Torlakson, held a hearing to discuss how to push for a \$10 billion infrastructure bond to modernize the State's freeways with these life-saving communication technologies. Many officials and leaders said the cost and technology are not the hurdles – but political will, cooperation, and social acceptance are.

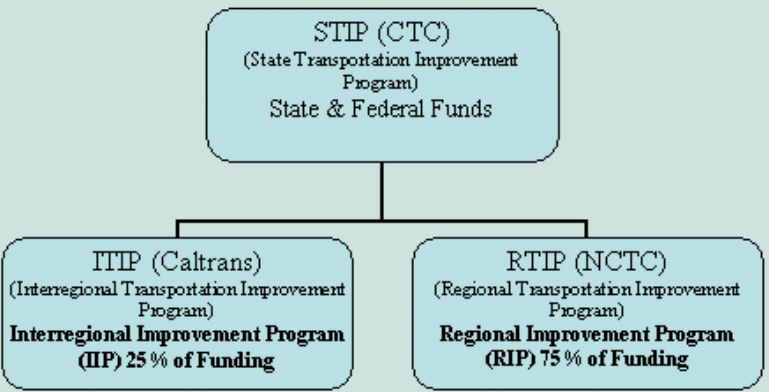
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# State Transportation Improvement Program



When NCTC submits regional transportation projects to the state for funding, the list of projects is called the **Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)**. Projects from each county are approved by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and then combined into a statewide document called the **State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)**. The RTIP and STIP are five-year programs proposing projects at the county and state levels. When the CTC adds projects from the regional programs into the state program, a schedule for proposed funding is established and these projects are considered “programmed.” A project must be programmed into the state document (into the STIP) to be considered for funding by the CTC.

The diagram above shows the flow of State and Federal revenues down to each region for expenditure, and also to Caltrans for planning of projects, in cooperation with the counties. The provisions of Senate Bill 45 (SB 45) gave significant local control over the programming of the 75% of the State Highway Account funds that flows down from the State (through the STIP) to the Regional Improvement Program (RIP). The RIP is a combination of state and federal transportation funds given to the region to maintain and improve the transportation system. Also through SB 45, Caltrans is given jurisdiction over 25% of the State Highway Account revenues through the State (STIP). Caltrans is responsible for ownership and operation of the state highway system, so improvements and capacity increasing projects outside of urban areas are to be funded by their share of the revenues given to them through the Interregional Improvement Program (IIP).

If Caltrans and a regional agency agree on a transportation need, they can recommend a new project to be jointly funded from county and interregional shares. A good example of that is the recent widening of SR 49 from the Bear River Bridge to Wolf/Combie Road and the proposed signal and widening near the SR 49/LaBarr Meadows Road intersection.

A programmed project does not get funds to proceed to construction until the CTC “allocates” funding (authorizes a check to

be cut). In years past, once a project was programmed into the state program (STIP) it was pretty much assured of moving to completion on the scheduled dates. With current state budget issues and cuts in the state transportation funding revenues, the 2002 and 2004 STIP processes did not provide funds for regional construction as programmed for these years. For 2006 NCTC is carrying forward a \$9,071,000 advance from the 2004 STIP funding, therefore NCTC will not receive any “new” RIP dollars in the 2006 STIP. Unless there is an infusion of new Federal or State funds into the 2008 STIP, NCTC will not receive any new RIP funds before 2014.

While SB 45 and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA 21) have given some funds for local projects, street and road maintenance needs are still critically under-funded. Gasoline tax revenues have not kept pace with the accelerated growth or inflation. Existing revenue sources are not sufficient to offset these losses and additional revenues are needed.

Even though the State cannot guarantee payment of funds to programmed projects, the process of planning is still required. NCTC is currently preparing the regional project list (RTIP), which must be prepared every odd-numbered year. Each update adds two new years of funding and includes projects carried forward from the previous program, plus adds new projects. The proposal is developed in cooperation with members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Caltrans District 3 staff, and by utilizing the estimated county shares for the 2006 STIP.

A Public Hearing will be conducted on the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) [see May 2005 newsletter for additional information on the RTP] and the RTIP at the January 18, 2006 NCTC meeting. If you would like to participate in the hearing, the meeting will start at 8:30 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors Chambers located at 950 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City. Information on the RTP and RTIP will be posted on the NCTC website during the first part of January for your review. If you are unable to attend the meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>, but would like to share your comments, please contact Daniel B. Landon, Executive Director, at (530) 265-3202 before the January meeting. [NCTC](#)

# February 2006 Transportation Workshop

**What is the relationship between these pictures?**  
Come to the workshop on transportation planning and find out.

Aerial Photograph of the Grass Valley Area  
(Traffic Analysis Zones Depicted in Red)

Grass Valley Area 2027 Land Use  
(Traffic Analysis Zones Depicted in Red)

The NCTC has determined they would like to hold several workshops in 2006 to focus on specific topics of interest to the community and the Commissioners. The first workshop will be held February 15<sup>th</sup> and the topic of discussion will be regional transportation planning. An overview of NCTC’s Mission, responsibilities, and current activities will be presented. This will include a discussion of data used by NCTC to develop traffic projections in our model, and to analyze proposed land use developments. Information will be presented regarding future changes to transportation infrastructure and systems, to promote dialogue regarding future topics for the Overall Work Program.

Further information will be available in January. [NCTC](#)

# “The Bridges of Nevada County” – Part 5

As “*The Bridges of Nevada County*” series continues, we feature **Edward’s Crossing Bridge**, located on North Bloomfield Road at the South Fork of the Yuba River. A short driving distance from Nevada City, you can enjoy a swim, hike, raft trip in the spring, or a great place just to rest in the sun. The bridge is 114 feet long and was built by the American Bridge Company in 1904. The structure is a three-hinged metal arch, with triangular members and steel pins. A replica of this, the Gault Bridge (see July 2004 NCTC newsletter), was built in Nevada City a year later by the same company. Edward’s Crossing Bridge was the main access to North Bloomfield and Malakoff Diggings from Nevada City, along the South Yuba Turnpike Road, and was previously named Robinsons Upper Crossing. This is still a Nevada County maintained roadway. The bridge was one of the first constructed along the South Yuba River.

When gold seekers poured into Nevada County around 1849 there was a need to cross the river. Early entrepreneurs made makeshift barges by turning over wagons, fastening them together, and using them to ferry people across the river. Edward’s Crossing was one of those locations. As the automobile became more popular, the need for bridges became eminent and this bridge was built.



People watching rafters take off under the Edward’s Crossing Bridge



Rafting down the South Fork of the Yuba



Rafters enjoying the high waters in May

*A little trivia:* In 1850 a Court of Sessions was formed, a part of the newly formed County government, which regulated the charges to cross on ferries and later to cross bridges. In 1856 this regulating responsibility was transferred to the Nevada County Board of Supervisors. The tolls helped with the limited county budget. Most toll charges were discontinued in 1901 and the roads were taken over by the County. [NCTC](#)

(Portions of the information in this article were taken from [http://www.ncgold.com/Museums\\_Parks/syrrp/](http://www.ncgold.com/Museums_Parks/syrrp/) and an article that appeared in *The Union* newspaper on July 14, 2005 about local swimming holes.)

Looking upstream from the Edward’s Crossing Bridge